

## **PSY 209: Article Summary Assignment**

**Due: Monday, January 23, at the beginning of class, worth 20 points**

Purpose: This assignment acquaints you with how research is presented in a scientific article. In the course of this research methods class, you will need to read, understand, and integrate articles related to your research topic into the introduction you will be writing for your final paper. You will also have to present your research and results in APA style similar to these articles. Later in life if you do become a psychologist, being able to read and process scientific articles will aid you in understanding and evaluating the literature in your field. This assignment asks you to provide a summary of a research study, with the idea that someone who has not read the article itself would be able to understand the major points of the study from your summary.

Article selection: You may choose one of the articles listed below. Both are in your reader.

1. Karau, S. J., & Hart, J. W. (1998). Group Cohesiveness and Social Loafing: Effects of a Social Interaction Manipulation on Individual Motivation Within Groups. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice* 2(3), 185-191.
2. Takarangi, M. K. T., & Strange, D. (2010). Emotional Impact Feedback Changes How we Remember Negative Autobiographical Experiences. *Experimental Psychology* 57(5), 354-359.

Grading: The assignment is worth a total of 20 points. Clearly addressing each of the sub-points under “Content” is worth one point unless otherwise stated. Four additional points comprise your “style” grade; it encompasses such aspects as correct grammar and clear organization and expression. **A rough draft (2 copies) is due on Wednesday, 1/18.** The final draft is to be turned in at the beginning of class on 1/23. Papers submitted late will lose 4 points per day (including non-class days).

Help: Please refer to the handout in your reader titled “Summarizing a Research Article.” For help with your writing you might visit the University of Washington Psychology Department’s Writing Center on the web at <http://www.psych.uw.edu/psych.php#p=339>. I have included their handout on “Style Points for Scientific Writing” in our reader and I think you’ll find it especially helpful. If you have specific questions, please ask.

Content (1 point each except where indicated):

1. Describe the key points of the research (this entire section should be no longer than 1.25 pages).
  - a. What question were the authors investigating in the study?
  - b. What did the authors predict? (i.e., what was the hypothesis?)
  - c. What was the nature of the method used (e.g. experimental, descriptive, archival, etc.)?
  - d. Was random selection and/or random assignment used?
  - e. Who were the participants? Did they have any special characteristics?
  - f. Describe the theoretical and/or operational definitions of the variables.
  - g. **(2 points)** What was the procedure? (i.e., what was done)
  - h. What were the major results? (i.e., what was found)
  - i. **(2 points)** How did the experimenters interpret the results? What are the implications, how are the findings relevant?
2. Give your evaluation of the research by discussing the points below (1 paragraph).
  - a. **(2 points)** Do you feel that the research was executed well? Why or why not?

- b. Do you think that the study had internal validity? Why or why not? If not, what were possible “third” variables?
- c. Do you think that the study has external validity? Why or why not?
- d. Do you think that the research posed any ethical concerns? Were they addressed?

Writing your assignment:

1. Your audience is another intelligent adult who has taken introductory psychology. S/he is interested, but not familiar with the topic.
2. Make sure to introduce the study with the authors’ names (in the order they are listed on the article) and the year. See #7 in your reader for in text APA format.
3. Clearly address each point under “Content”. However, your audience wants to read a narrative, not a point-by-point. Hint: Thoroughly answer all of the questions in complete sentences and *then* weave your answers into a clear narrative. When writing about past research, methods and results will be in the past tense. Theories and hypotheses may be stated in the present tense.
4. The writing must be your own. Be wary of copying or closely paraphrasing the authors. If you use the authors’ words, be sure to use quotation marks and reference the page from which you took the quote.
5. Please be concise (really concise papers should contain all of part 1 in 1¼ page, and part 2 in less than 1 page).
6. Don’t become bogged down with statistics you don’t yet know. You don’t need to provide any stats in your summary, just the gist of the results.
7. At the end of your paper, please provide a full citation of the study you are summarizing (again, see #7 in your reader- or the front of this handout!).

Requirements: The paper should be typed, Times font, 12 point, 1.5 or double-spaced, **no longer than 2 pages in length**, and stapled. Please include a header with your name, the date, and ‘Article Summary’ at the top (you may use Header in Word to do this). Margins should be one inch on all sides.